

Howard County Wildlife Driving Tour

Mount Airy

Sykesville

Did you know

The North American Butterfly Association has an ongoing program to census North American butterflies. Each year Howard County Recreation & Parks conducts park surveys the third Saturday in July. Contact Sue Muller at 410-313-4697 to participate. No experience is necessary!

Legend

County Parkland	WSSC Land	Columbia Association
State Parkland	Private Land	Patuxent Branch Trail

Bike Trails	Restrooms & Port-o-pot
Birds	Turtle
Butterfly	Picnic Tables
Dragonfly	Bus Routes
Frog	
Handicap Accessible	
Hiking Trails	
Horseback Riding Amenities	



Artwork: Helen Lowe Metzmen

1. Poplar Springs Park – The Pollinator Park



Where: Rt. 144 west through Lisbon, then right on Watersville Rd. and left into park.

Species: Ruby-throated Hummingbird, butterfly species, moth species, bee species and wasp species.

Habitat: Bottomland forest and meadow.

Seasons: Spring to fall.

Notes: 7 acres in area with .5 miles of hiking trail. Several theme gardens have been planted for specific butterfly species as well as Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, Mason Bees and a moon garden for moths. Habitat for the Baltimore Checkerspot has also been established.

2. Western Regional Park – Shorebirds



Where: Carr's Mill Rd., one-half mile west of Rt. 97.

Species: Killdeer, Solitary Sandpiper, Spotted Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper with potential for a dozen shorebird species.

Habitat: Ponds, short-grass areas, woods, warm season grass meadow and second growth forest.

Seasons: April through mid-May; late July-October.

Notes: 190 acres in area with 1.5 miles of hiking trail. The wide variety of habitats has produced unusual species including Buff-breasted Sandpiper, Short-billed Dowitcher and Clay-colored Sparrow.

3. Warfield Pond Park - Turtles



Where: Rt. 32 to Burntwoods Rd to Shady Lane and right on MacClintock Dr. and left into park.

Species: Painted Turtles, Red-eared Sliders and Snapping Turtles.

Habitat: Pond, young second growth forest and mowed areas.

Seasons: April through October.

Notes: 20 acres in area with .7 miles of hiking trail. Red-eared Sliders and Painted Turtles can be seen basking on the barley bales in the water in front of gazebo. Look for Snapping Turtles floating on the water.

4. Schooley Mill Park – Cavity Nesting Birds



Where: Rt. 108 West through Clarksville, then turn left onto Hall Shop Rd. and right into park.

Species: Eastern Bluebird, Tree Swallow, Carolina Chickadee, House Wren, Carolina Wren and Tufted Titmouse.

Habitat: Open meadow and mature forest.

Seasons: April into September.

Notes: 192 acres in area with 5 miles of hiking trail. Look for the nest box trail that meanders through the open meadows. Please do not peek in the nest boxes!

5. Middle Patuxent Environmental Area – Butterflies and Woodcock



Where: Rt. 108 west past Cedar Lane. Turn left onto Trotter Rd. and proceed .8 miles and turn left into the parking lot.

Species: Monarch, Swallowtail species, Skipper species, Pearl Crescent, Red-spotted Purple, Fritillary species and Hairstreak species.

Habitat: Open meadows, mature forest, floodplain, warm season grass meadow and river.

Seasons: April through October.

Notes: 1040 acres in area with 5 miles of hiking trail. Uncommon sightings include Northern Pearly Eye and White M Hairstreak. Migratory woodcock can be seen and heard at dusk in March.

6. Brighton Dam – Bald Eagles



Where: Rt. 29 to Rt. 108 west. In Clarksville, turn right onto Ten Oaks Rd. and then left on Brighton Dam Rd. Once you cross over the reservoir, turn left into the Brighton Dam Visitor Center to park. Viewing is from the bridge.

Species: Bald Eagles.

Habitat: Reservoir surrounded by mature hardwood forest.

Seasons: October – February, early morning is the best time.

Notes: 1617 acres in area with 0 miles of hiking trail. Waterfowl viewing is best during spring and fall migration. Visit the Azalea Garden in May.

7. Savage Mill Trail – Zebra Swallowtail



Where: Rt. 32 to Rt. 1 south, then right on Gorman Rd. Turn right onto Foundry St. and park along the road.

Species: Zebra Swallowtail.

Habitat: Upland forest along Little Patuxent River.

Seasons: Late April through early July.

Notes: A one mile hiking trail. The larva of this butterfly depends upon the Pawpaw tree for survival, which grows along this trail. Take a break from the tour and stop off at the Historic Savage Mill just across the river to shop or grab a bite to eat.

8. Savage Park – Riverine Odonates (Dragonflies & Damselflies)



Where: Rt. 1 to Guilford Rd. west. Left on Vollmerhausen and left into Wincopin Trail parking lot.

Species: Ebony Jewelwings, American Rubyspot, Dragonhunter, Common Sanddragon and Violet Dancer.

Habitat: Upland and floodplain adjoining the Little Patuxent River.

Seasons: June through September.

Notes: 220 acres in area with 6 miles of hiking trail. Odonates often perch on rocks in or near rapids.

9. Patuxent Branch Trail - Woodfrogs



Where: South on Brokenland Pkwy to a left on Guilford Rd. and right into parking lot.

Species: Woodfrogs.

Habitat: Floodplain adjoining the Little Patuxent River.

Seasons: February and March.

Notes: 5 miles of mostly paved pathway. May also hear Spring Peepers.

10. Lake Elkorn – Lake Odonates (Dragonflies & Damselflies)



Where: Snowden River Pkwy to a right on Brokenland Pkwy. Turn right into parking lot.

Species: Common Green Darner, Slaty Skimmer, Twelve-spotted Skimmer, Eastern Amberwing and Black Saddlebags.

Habitat: Lake with emergent vegetation on some shoreline areas along with wooded sections and exposed rocks.

Seasons: Late May to September.

Notes: 23 acres in area with a 2 mile paved pathway. Be sure to also check the Fore Bay Pond at the southeast end of the lake.

11. Rockburn Branch Park - Mammals



Where: Rt. 1 to Montgomery Rd. then right on Landing Rd. Park entrance is on the left.

Species: White-tailed Deer, Eastern Chipmunk, Coyote, Eastern Gray Squirrel, Bat species, Ground Hog, Eastern Cottontail and Red Fox.

Habitat: Mature forest and short grass areas.

Seasons: Year round.

Notes: 415 acres in area with 6 miles of hiking trail.

12. Meadowbrook Park – Hawk Watching



Where: Take Rt. 100 to Long Gate Pkwy. Turn onto Meadowbrook Lane and Pass the Park & Ride. Park entrance is on the left. Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk and Broad-winged Hawk with potential for others.

Habitat: Excellent view of the sky plus multiple ponds and second growth edge for a variety of species.

Seasons: Late August to early December.

Notes: 84 acres in area with 2 miles of paved pathway. Almost any county migrant might be seen flying over the park.

13. Centennial Park – Winter Waterfowl



Where: Rt. 29 to Rt. 108 west. The park entrance is one mile on the right.

Species: American Wigeon, Canvasback, Ring-necked Duck, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser and Ruddy Duck. Several other species are possible.

Habitat: Lake and meadow.

Seasons: Mid-October through mid-March.

Notes: 335 acres in area with 2 miles of paved pathway. During the coldest weather, waterfowl concentrate in an ice-free area near the center of the lake. This park is a prime site for numerous bird species all year. The deep east end is good for diving ducks; shallow west end attracts puddle ducks.

14. Font Hill Park – Frogwatching



Where: Centennial Lane to Frederick Rd. east and turn right on Font Hill Dr. The park is on the right with parking on the street.

Species: Spring Peeper, American Toad, Bullfrog, Green Frog, Gray Treefrog and Pickerel Frog.

Habitat: Pond and wetland.

Seasons: March – early August.

Notes: 24 acres in area with 1 mile of paved pathway. Frog and toad species singing, change from spring to summer with most of them singing around dusk.

15. David Force Park - Woodpeckers



Where: Rt. 29 to Rt. 40 west to a right on Pebble Beach Dr. The park entrance is located .5 miles on the right. Parking is on the street.

Species: Pileated, Hairy, Red-bellied, Northern Flicker and Downy Woodpeckers.

Habitat: Second growth forest, wet meadow, river and bottomland forest

Seasons: Year round.

Notes: 251 acres in area with a one mile hiking trail.

16. Howard County Conservancy – Foxes and Coyotes



Where: Rt. 29 to Rt. 99 west. Turn right into the Howard County Conservancy just before Woodstock Rd.

Species: Foxes and Coyotes.

Habitat: Fields, forest and stream.

Seasons: Year round (Friday & Saturday).

Notes: 232 acres in area with 8 miles of hiking trail. Both species are primarily nocturnal and can be found hunting all over the nature preserve. Evidence of their travels is abundant, leaving footprints and scats. They are both opportunistic feeders eating berries, seeds, insects, small mammals, frogs and an occasional bird.

17. Patapsco Valley State Park – Forest Interior Dwelling Birds



Where: Hollofield Area - I-70 to Rt. 29 south (Exit 87) to Rt. 40 East. Go 2 miles to the park entrance on the right. Avalon/Glen Artney/Orange Grove – Follow Rt. 1 north into Baltimore County. Turn left onto South St. The park entrance is on the left.

Species: Barred Owl, Pileated Woodpecker, Wood Thrush, Red-shouldered Hawk, and Scarlet Tanager.

Habitat: Predominantly mature hardwood and a 100 acre mixed hardwood-pine forest.

Seasons: Various species can be seen year round. Many neotropical migratory species such as warblers are best seen in the fall and spring.

Notes: 16,083 acres in area with 177 miles of hiking trail. Forest interior dwelling birds are found in many areas of Patapsco but are not often seen. Listen for the calls and sounds of these birds while hiking one of the many trails.

